# *Document No.* 21.

SOLD at 13 PARK ROW, and at all Democratic Newspaper Offices.

# THE TWO
# Letters of Gen. H. M. Naglee about Gen. McClellan.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 27, 1864.

MY DEAR SIR: Our acquaintance, and all of the relations that have ever existed between us, are confined to two or three accidental meetings, at one of which you were pleased to refer to the lasting impression made upon you, when a poor boy, by the kindness of my father, who always took you by the hand, and gave you cheering, friendly words of encouragement and advice. You were pleased to acknowledge to the son the kind and valuable influences received by you from the father, and to proffer your friendly services whenever they would be acceptable.

Under the above circumstances you prepared for me and my friends no ordinary surprise when you deliberately composed, delivered and published in the *Press* of the 23d inst., a voluntary, unprovoked attack upon me, in the following words:

It got out that the President was determined to have the army moved, and it was found that General McClellan had no plan; and here I may state that we owe the Peninsular campaign to those distinguished Senators, Latham, of California, and Rice, of Minnesota, and a brigadier in the column of Joseph Hooker. General McClellan's plan was concocted by others and put into his hands. It was agreed on in a council of war. That plan was submitted to the President. It was submitted in the presence of Secretary Stanton. Stanton put them through a strict course of examination. One general (Blenker) owned that he did not understand the plan, but would sustain it, as he thought he had to obey the mandates of his chief. General Naglee was one of those present, and Stanton observed that he had but one star. "Sir," said Mr. Stanton, "you have no right here." "I am representing General Hooker," said he. It was afterwards found out that General Naglee was absent without leave, and that fighting Joe Hooker knew nothing of the council." (Applause.)

Now, my dear sir, this statement is simply false, and on the part of your friend, Mr. Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, maliciously false.

The Peninsular campaign was not indicated by "Senators Latham, of California, and Rice, of Minnesota, and a brigadier in the column of Joseph Hooker," as asserted by you. General Naglee was at Washington with proper leave, and with the full knowledge of General Hooker, and was a member of the council of war by direction of General McClellan, to represent the division of the army at Budd's ferry, in the absence of General Hooker, who was too far removed from Washington to be present. And unfortunately for the veracity of Mr. Stanton, the impertinent remarks which you ascribe to him could not have been made, for there were no officers of the council of war entitled, at that time, to more than one star.

Now, Judge, you knew, or should know, that the reputation of Mr. Stanton for truth and veracity is not above suspicion, and that you may well believe anything that may be said regarding his great incivility and rudeness, for not excepting yourself, I have never seen or heard of an officer or civilian who did not condemn him for the utter want of all of the requisites of a gentleman.

This is not the first time Mr. Stanton has been guilty of the most deliberate, malicious misrepresentation, and for your gratification I will relate an instance that occurred upon my arrival in Washington, immediately after the conclusion of "the seven days' fight," in the beginning of July of 1862, and when I was surprised to learn that during the continuance of that desperate struggle, and during the time of dreadful suspense, whilst nothing could be heard of General McClellan and his gallant army, Mr. Stanton had everywhere denounced General McClellan as a traitor to his country, and as incapable of commanding a regiment. I learned this from a number of the members of Congress, who were astonished and confounded, and who, with pain, eagerly sought from me some explanation of such extraordinary conduct. I could render them no satisfaction, but reported the circumstances to General McClellan upon my arrival at his headquarters on the following day, the 8th of July. His surprise, Judge, was greater than mine; without uttering a word, he turned to his portfolio, took from it a letter, which he placed before me, and said: "Read that; I have just received it from Mr. Stanton."

With his consent I made a copy of the letter, and returning to Washington, placed it in the hands of those who had heard the denunciations of Mr. Stanton, and who had advised me of them. They desired to read it to the Senate, and to publish the outrage and the vindication, and they telegraphed to General McClellan for his permission, which he declined to give them. The following is a copy of the letter:

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, D. C., July 5, 1862.

DEAR GENERAL:—I had a talk with General Marcy, and meant to have written you by him, but am called to the country, where Mrs. Stanton is with her children, to see one of them die. I can, therefore, only say, my dear General, in this brief moment, that there is no cause in my heart or conduct for the cloud that wicked men have raised between us for their own base and selfish purposes. No man had ever a truer friend than I have been to you, and shall continue to be. You are seldom absent from my thoughts, and I am ready to make any sacrifice to aid you. Time allows me to say no more than that

I pray Almighty God to deliver you and your army from all peril, and lead you on to victory.

Yours, truly,
EDWIN M. STANTON.

Now, Judge, what think you of this man, who, made Secretary of War by the request and influence of General McClellan, was vilifying and abusing and uttering falsehoods against him, and who could at the same time sit down and deliberately write such a letter?

You have referred to the council of war held in Washington in March of 1862. Every effort has been made in vain to bring the proceedings of that council before the public. A call was made for them in the House of Representatives and was tabled by the Republican party. A request made by the recorder of that council, of Mr. Stanton, to allow him to have the proceedings made up in proper form, was refused in a most rude and insulting manner, and the papers have never been allowed to leave his possession since.

Now, Judge, for your especial benefit, I will relate the history of that important event, that you may, if you will, do justice to all concerned.

The council of war consisted of Brigadier-Generals Sumner, McDowell, Franklin, F. J. Porter, McCall, Heintzelman, Keyes, A. Porter, W. F. Smith, Barnard, Blenker and Naglee, each entitled to but "one star." It was called together by order of General McClellan on the night of March 7, 1862, to convene at ten A. M. on the following day.

General McClellan came into the council room at the hour appointed, and placing on the table a large map, explained his proposed Peninsular campaign, which, before this time, I believe to have been known to no one present excepting General Franklin and probably Fitz J. Porter. Upon retiring he left upon the table, for the consideration of the council, the following inquiries:

1.—Whether it is advisable that the base of operations shall be changed, the transportation being ready at Annapolis in all of next week?

2.—Whether it is better to make an advance to the front before changing the base, should such a change be determined upon?

3.—Whether a forward movement, with the object of destroying the river batteries, is advisable, and when it can be commenced, and whether the naval force, with the assistance of the Ericsson battery, can alone accomplish that object?

After a session of three hours the council were summoned to appear before the President. He advised them that he was quite unwell and exceedingly nervous; that the pressure had been intense against General McClellan. He expressed himself gratified to have the opportunity to see and know the officers of the army, and to be instructed by them in regard to army matters, which were to him very incomprehensible.

I informed him that, as recorder of the council of war which had held its session by order of Gen. McClellan, I would advise him of the result of its proceedings, and then read them to him. "What, said he, "have the council decided by a vote of eight to four—two to one—in favor of the Peninsular campaign?" He then asked many questions in regard to the same, until Mr. Stanton came in, and I proposed to read the proceedings to him. He replied, "Give me the papers, I'll read them myself," and, after reading them over and preparing his notes, he, as you say, "put them (the council) through the strict course of examination" which you refer to. This examination, made for the purpose of neutralizing the effect of the decision of the council of war on the mind of the President, and thus carry out the objects of those who had been insisting upon the removal of General McClellan, lasted for four or five hours, during which time it was only interrupted by an occasional expression of the President, indicating his satisfaction and gratification at the many explanations of military movements contemplated, and which he had not before been able to comprehend.

It was now getting dark. Mr. Stanton's questions indicated approaching exhaustion, and finding there was a silence which called for a cessation of hostilities on his part for the night, Mr. Lincoln expressed himself highly gratified with the interview, said he was impressed with the earnestness and intelligence of the officers present, and that he had every confidence in them. He was now determined not to remove General McClellan, as he had promised to do, but that he should make his campaign, as approved by the council of war, under restrictions which he would make known on the following morning, at ten o'clock, when he desired the presence of all the officers of the council, and until after which time he desired that none of them should leave the city.

Before leaving the President the recorder of the council approached the Secretary and said:—"If you please, Mr. Stanton, permit me to have the proceedings of the council of war, that they may be copied in a fair hand, and General Sumner, the president of the council, will sign them, the recorder will sign them, and they will then be in proper form." "I'm just as good a judge of the form as you are," was the reply of your friend.

Other incivilities have been attempted by Mr. Stanton towards me, the manner and result of which he has neither forgotten nor forgiven, and which he may relate to you whenever he may feel so disposed.

On the following morning, at the appointed hour, when all of the officers of the council of war had assembled, Mr. Lincoln said:—"I have slept better than for two weeks. I feel relieved of an immense responsibility. I have determined upon the following programme," which he submitted verbally, and which was substantially as follows:—

"I will permit General McClellan to carry

out his campaign. He shall leave sufficient force to defend the works before Washington. He shall embark fifty thousand men from Annapolis; and then, unless the batteries on the Potomac, which you assure me will necessarily be abandoned, are withdrawn or silenced, I shall reserve my authority to embark other troops." He then said, "I have determined to divide General McClellan's army into four corps, and I shall appoint the commanders of them." And afterwards he promoted the four officers who had opposed General McClellan's campaign, three of whom he appointed to the command of corps, and, with the exception of Generals Franklin and Smith, who have been the subjects of constant annoyance and indignities since, the others have all been dismissed from the army.

The Peninsular campaign was proposed by General McClellan whilst commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States, and was intended to be made with the forces then under his command in Eastern Virginia, estimated at over two hundred thousand men. It was so accepted by tho President, and the movement was commenced upon that basis. General McClellan had scarcely left Washington to take the field when the Secretary of War relieved him of all the armies not under his (General McClellan's) immediate command, and assumed command of them himself. The troops left in Northeastern Virginia were placed under the command of McDowell, Banks, Fremont and Sigel, each being independent of the other, and of General McClellan, and all subject to the order of Mr. Stanton. Whilst the above division of our army was taking place, the Confederates concentrated theirs until, on the 26th day of June, General McClellan found himself before Richmond with eighty-five thousand men (including McCall's division), and was attacked by the concentrated Confederate force of one hundred and seventy-five thousand at the very moment when McDowell, under protest, withdrew his assistance from McClellan, by the orders of the President and Secretary of War.

The campaign under General Grant did not commence until the 4th of May, 1864. That of Chancellorsville, in which the casualties of that army were estimated at thirty thousand men, and which, but for the providential killing of Stonewall Jackson, would have been annihilated, was planned by the President and General Hooker, or to use the President's own words, "by Joe and I," of which the Secretary of War and General Halleck were kept profoundly ignorant, and was not commenced until May 2, 1863; whilst that of the Peninsula, for the delay of which General McClellan was so much censured, was commenced on the 25th of March, 1862, forty days in advance of either of the others.

Why this bitter enmity and persecution of General McClellan? why, in the beginning of March, was the President pressed to death to remove him, even before he had made his first trial in command of the Army of the Potomac? Why did a distinguished member of the Senate, on the 17th of March, write to me: "The cry against McClellan is increasing; every effort is being made to crush him." What possible chance had General McClellan to succeed, when his own Government did everything in their power to embarrass his movements and break him down? One would think his task sufficiently onerous, laborious and responsible, when, without experience, after the first disastrous rout at Bull Run, he reorganized the armies of the United States and was preparing to fight them without the additional conviction being forced upon him at every step that his own Government were determined "to crush him."

Judge, you and I met within ten days after the dreadful battles before Richmond. You attacked General McClellan with a bitterness and feeling that ill becomes a Christian gentleman. I then begged you not to break down General McClellan until you had given him a fair trial, and until you had found a better man, and challenged you to name a better general. I now do the same thing, and appeal to the record of the past thirty months, and to the rivers of blood that have flown since, to sustain what I then asserted. I refer you to the opinions of foreign officers, and I assure you that among the old officers of the army I shall be fully sustained.

The preference of General McClellan for the Peninsular campaign, and the condemnation of the President's plan, have been fully sustained. The families and friends of the one hundred and thirty thousand men lost south of the Rapidan since the 4th of May last, proclaim it everywhere. Mr. Stanton told the country at that time, he had a hundred thousand men more than he wanted, and now he tells you he wants a hundred thousand more men.

| | |
|---|---|
| General Grant crossed the Rapidan with an army variously estimated from 118,000 to . . . . | 120,000 |
| He afterwards added Butler's . . | 40,000 |
| He was reënforced . . . . | 45,000 |
| Making, exclusive of Sigel's 30,000, . | 205,000 |

On the 1st of September, our forces were estimated, exclusive of Sheridan's 30,000, at 50,000.

| | |
|---|---|
| General Lee had on the Rapidan, after he had concentrated his army, . | 85,000 |
| Beauregard joined him at Richmond with his forces from the South, which, with those near Petersburg, amounted to . . . . . | 30,000 |
| Breckinridge brought . . . | 10,000 |
| And Lee was reënforced, probably, . | 30,000 |
| Making, in all, . . . . | 155,000 |

On the 1st of September, his forces were es-

timated at Richmond at 45,000, exclusive of Early's command—30,000—showing the discharges and loss from General Grant to be 150,000, and that of Lee to be 85,000.

Judge Kelly, were the records of the council of war, and that of "the strict course of examination" made by Mr. Stanton, indicating the very difficulties and dreadful losses General Grant has lately sustained, ever placed before him? And why not? And who is responsible for the one hundred thousand men unnecessarily and wickedly sacrificed south of the Rapidan, in the experiment made to prove that General McClellan and the council of war were wrong, and that the President's plan was right.

The army of the United States, as you found it at the commencement of this war, was composed of a high-toned, intelligent, honorable, gallant set of men, fully equal to the contest before them. They had always studiously avoided all political connections; many of whom had been thirty years in the service of their country and had never voted. They held their country and the honor and integrity of it before every other consideration. Had a rule been adopted requiring that no political subject should be introduced into the army, but that all political rights should be respected, and had army officers only been held responsible for the conduct of the war, it would have terminated long ago.

Why have McClellan, and Sedgwick, and McPherson, and Bayard, and Franklin, and Buell, and Meade, and Averill, and Porter, and a score of other general officers, with hundreds, if not thousands, of officers of an inferior grade, been offended and held back, and many of them dismissed from the army without a word of explanation—an arbitrary act unknown in Great Britain—while Pope, and Burnside, and Hooker, and Butler, and Hunter, and Banks, and Sigel, and Sickles, and hundreds of others, certainly no better than the former, have been preferred? Why was Gen. Stone, than whom there is not a more loyal man and accomplished gentleman and gallant soldier in the country, confined in prison for fifteen months? And when released by an act of Congress, why was it that neither the President, nor Secretary of War, nor Secretary of State, or other persons at Washington, would assent to any knowledge or any participation in the arrest? Such outrages are calculated to break down the honor and *esprit du corps* of any army, and all have looked on with disgust and horror and pain at the shameful injustice and outrages that have been continually heaped upon so many of their old friends and comrades in arms, whom they know incapable of an ungentlemanly, dishonorable, unsoldierly, or disloyal act.

Why did the Committee on the Conduct of the War investigate and falsify with such nice precision the conduct of McClellan and his friends, and overlook the volumes of charges filed in the War Department against Fremont, and Sigel, and Hunter, and others, and entirely overlook the immense slaughter at Chancellorsville, and Fredericksburg, and south of the Rapidan? Why did a secret political inquisition, with no other pretext than that they suspected him of political ambition, sit over five hundred days, and manufacture over seventeen hundred pages of *ex parte* testimony against a young officer, a Christian gentleman, an honest man, who, Heaven only knows, never had but one purpose, and that, to serve his country and his God?

You know, Judge, that while in Washington, General McClellan studiously avoided all political association, and to such an extent that many of his friends of both parties were much offended.

The first knowledge that I ever had of any political ambition on his part, was after he had been retired from active service and sent in disgrace to New Jersey; and this was after his fitness for the succession had been discovered by Mr. Lincoln, and the people had signified their affection for him. His letters and orders have been called political; but they were eminently proper, and refer entirely to the military policy of the country. But, Judge, suppose we admit that General McClellan had an ambition to be President of the United States, was it not a laudable ambition, and is there any impropriety in it? Is the field not open to him as well as to Mr. Lincoln, or Mr. Fremont, or Mr. Chase, or the many others infinitely his inferiors? So far as the objections to his military qualifications are concerned, we have only to remind you that, within the last sixty days, a confidential friend of the President was sent to offer him one of the most important commands of the army. But this proposition was coupled with the most dishonorable condition—that he should decline to be a candidate for the Presidency. General McClellan restrained his indignation, and replied to the bearer of the message, "Go back to Washington and say to the President for me that when I receive my official, written orders, he shall have my answer."

Beware, Judge, of the intemperate abuse of your political opponents, as proud and loyal as you are, who would rather see the continent of America sink into the ocean, with all that dwells upon it, than see our nationality destroyed; who will not endure this constant usurpation of authority and encroachment upon their rights, and whom you may drive into a dreadful conflict, in which the abolitionist and the negro may find themselves arrayed against all who will unitedly stand, hand in hand, and shoulder to shoulder, in defence of the Constitution and the fundamental laws of the land. Very respectfully,

HENRY M. NAGLEE.

To Hon. Wm. D. Kelley, Philadelphia.

# SECOND CHAPTER

FROM THE

# SECRET HISTORY OF THE WAR.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 6.

MY DEAR SIR: I once went hunting, and fired at a mischievous, chattering chipmonk, and found, when the smoke had cleared away, that the chipmonk, although badly wounded, made a great pretence that he was not hurt at all. But, strange to say, when firing at the lesser game, I had hit a fox, and that fox one of the most cunning, destructive animals that had ever infested the neighborhood. Would you believe it, I never stopped to listen to the chipmonk, but loaded again for the fox.

Now, Judge, the moral: Without a word or an act on my part to justify it, you attacked me, and I responded. Although winged, you declare you are not hurt; but the President and Secretary, I am informed, are badly hurt, the latter mortally; the former so much so that I shall let you flutter until I try another load. Look on, Judge; be quiet, await your time; I have ammunition for both the fox and the chipmonk.

In the *Press*, *North American* and *Inquirer*, and in all of the Republican newspapers of the country, I have found the following:

GENERAL NAGLEE'S LETTER.

ONE OF HIS STATEMENTS ABOUT PRESIDENT LINCOLN AUTHORITATIVELY DENIED.

[From the National Republican (Official), Oct 3.]

The copperhead press of the country are giving circulation to a letter addressed by General Naglee to Hon. William D. Kelley, of Philadelphia, in which the author, speaking of General McClellan, makes the following statement:

"So far as the objections to his military qualifications are concerned, I have only to remind you that, within the last sixty days, a confidential friend of the President was sent to offer him one of the most important commands of the army. But this proposition was coupled with the most dishonorable condition—that he should decline to be a candidate for the Presidency. General McClellan restrained his indignation, and replied to the bearer of the message, 'Go back to Washington, and say to the President for me, that when I receive my official written orders, he shall have my answer.'"

We are authorized to say that the President has no recollection of sending any message or messenger to General McClellan, or of receiving any from him, at any time since he was relieved of the command of the Army of the Potomac, and certainly none such as mentioned in the published letter of General Naglee. If the President sent a message in writing, the writing can be produced; if a messenger, he can be named. Let either be done if it can.

To this I answer, that before the assembling of the Chicago Convention, about the middle of August, the President sent one of his old and confidential friends to propose to McClellan that if he would decline to be a candidate for the Presidency before the Chicago Convention, and would consent to throw the weight of his influence, with the Democratic party, in favor of the Republican nominee, he should have any position, civil or military, in the gift of the President, when reëlected, and that the whole influence of the next Administration should be thrown in his (McClellan's) favor for the succession.

Pardon me, Judge, but hold still just one moment longer, that I may inform you, that prior to this, there was a written correspondence between the son of this confidential old friend of the President, and a prominent Democrat, making substantially the same proposition. Now, in connection with the above, let me call the attention of your friends to the following extract from the published speech of the Hon. Montgomery Blair, made since my letter to you of the 27th of September, was written.

"On his (Vallandigham's) motion, every voice that had been raised to fury against the nomination of McClellan was silenced, and the vote in his favor made unanimous. There was a potent spell in his voice that made 'a cessation of hostilities,' 'a convention of the states,' of course as equals and independent, and a *quondam* chief of the federal army—(one whom to the last I believe to be true to the cause in which his country is embarked, and, I may add, whom the President held to be patriotic, and had concerted with General Grant to bring again into the field as his adjunct, if he turned his back on the proposals of the peace junto at Chicago)—to lead the last assault pressed by the Southern conspirators, countenanced by foreign powers, against the institutions of the country."

Let us rejoice. There is some hope for our country. Let us rejoice that we have found one honest man, one who would not sell himself, and betray his country, and who, amidst the most outrageous persecution that ever a strong government inflicted upon a single, unsupported, inexperienced young officer, had the courage to resent a disgraceful bribe and insult.

You have affirmed and re-affirmed that General McClellan had no plan, and that finally, about the end of February, in your own words, McClellan had exhausted the President's stock of patience; but that he had in the kindness of his heart determined to give General McClellan a chance to redeem himself from utter ridicule, and had given him ten days in which to propose a plausible plan of a campaign. It was then "you said he had no plan, and that when several of the promised ten days had passed he was still without a plan." You further say that General Naglee received a communication from a Democratic senator, Mr. Latham, of California, which let you (General Naglee) know that General McClellan was in danger of removal, because he had stipulated to submit a plan of campaign "within a certain number of days, and would be removed if he did not, and requested you (Naglee) to hasten to Washington." And now, Judge, listen to the truth. No doubt, having indulged so freely in fiction, the truth will be a little distasteful to you, but, as a favor to me, listen to it until I have done, after which, as far as I am concerned, you may resume your natural inclinations.

First, then, for the purpose of falsifying your declarations read the following:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, February 3, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR: You and I have distinct and different plans for a movement of the Army of the Potomac; yours to be done by the Chesapeake, up the Rappahannock to Urbana, and across land to the terminus of the railroad on the York river; mine to move directly to a point on the railroad southwest of Manassas.

*If* you will give *satisfactory answers* to the following questions, I shall gladly yield my plan to yours:

1st. Does not your plan involve a greatly larger expenditure of *time* and *money* than mine?

2d. Wherein is a victory *more certain* by your plan than mine?

3d. Wherein is a victory *more valuable* by your plan than mine?

4th. In fact, would it not be *less* valuable in this: that it would break no great line of the enemy's communications, while mine would?

5th. In case of a disaster, would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine?

Yours, truly,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Major General McClellan.

And for the further refutation and falsification of what you have said, I hereby assert what I know to be true. During the month of January, 1862, General McClellan had been very ill. The President became very restive under the outside pressure which demanded, through the Republican press, that the army should "on to Richmond," and was about to consent to some movement proposed by General McDowell. On hearing this, General McClellan arose from his sick bed and proceeded to the presidential mansion, there to join the President and his Cabinet, who had been assembled to meet him. He was asked by the President "*to give his plan of campaign.*" He hesitated for a moment, during which he remembered that all information furnished to the Cabinet found its way to the confidential friends of some of them, and thence by the multitude of spies that infested the War and other departments it was forthwith communicated to the enemy, and he replied that he would do so if the President ordered it, but as the President must know how immediately such information was transmitted to the enemy, he, McClellan, preferred not to make known his plan of campaign to the Cabinet unless the President should order it, and the President declined to make the order.

Mr. Chase remarked to one present, that if Mac persists in thus refusing information, he is a ruined man.

These circumstances occurred in January and on February 3d. Do you still intend to re-affirm "that McClellan had no plan, until the Democratic senators, Mr. Latham and Mr. Rice, and a brigadier from the column of Joseph Hooker, concocted one, and packed a council of war to approve of it?" on the 8th of March thereafter.

Now, Judge, you will save yourself and friends much confusion, which you have caused them in following you, if you would read the orders and letters that have been published upon all of these military subjects, and which may all be found in your favorite work of the report of the committee on the conduct of the war, or in General McClellan's report, which is not so great a favorite with you. You evince, again, the most extraordinary confusion when you assert that the President gave him ten days to find a plan, and confound the orders I have referred to with the following order of the President:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, March 8, 1862.

*President's General War Order, No. 8.*

* * * * * * * *

That any movement, as aforesaid, en route for a new base of operations, which may be ordered by the Commander-in-chief, and which may be intended to move upon the Chesapeake bay, shall begin to move upon the bay as early as the 18th March instant, and the General-in-chief shall be responsible that it moves as early as that day.

A. LINCOLN.

L. THOMAS, Adjutant-General.

In which you will observe, he did not order General McClellan to produce a plan within ten days, as you assert, but that his *movement* should commence within ten days.

Shifting from your original nomenclature, you now assert that the council was designated as a "Council of Division Commanders," and

that, with the exception of General Naglee, it was composed of division generals. Now, sir, as usual, you falsify the record. There were but nine division officers detailed, and it was convened by General McClellan as a "council of war."

Your voluntary, unprovoked attack made upon me on the 22d ultimo, needs no denial, for the mere fact of my being a member of a council of war convened by order of General McClellan, shows of itself that I was on detached duty by proper authority, over which neither your friend Mr. Stanton nor General Hooker had any control. The attack upon me under such circumstances, as well as your assertion that General McClellan had no plan until it was prepared for him by Senators Latham and Rice, and General Naglee, on the 8th of March, 1862, in face of the letters and orders of the President, of February 8, and March 8, herein referred to, and long since subjects of constant public discussion, exhibits on your part a recklessness of assertion and indifference of proper self-respect, that few of your friends will comprehend, and none of them attempt to justify.

Judge, if ever a question of veracity comes up between you and myself, we alone must settle it, and you must not attempt to shuffle off your responsibility and place it upon others, nor to protect yourself behind such "well-known individuals" as "Puffer" Moore and George Hacker. This may have been your practice heretofore, and you may have so acted with impunity, but rest assured it will not be permitted by me.

You refer to some great surprise that General McClellan proposed to make on the rebel line at Brentsville; and you make out, no doubt to your satisfaction, that the success of the surprise depended entirely upon a certain bridge to be constructed of canal boats, that were to have been passed into the Potomac near Harper's Ferry, and that it was found, when the movement was about to be made, that the outlet lock was too narrow for the boats. Now, this surprise of Brentsville may be entirely clear to you and Senators Wade and Johnson, but to myself and to my military friends, we cannot understand how the rebels in the direction of Brentsville could have been surprised by any movement in the direction indicated by you; but I suppose that that is not important with you, your real object being only to relate the story of that obstinate canal boat, that had passed through all the other locks upon the canal, but refused, in the face of the enemy, to pass the outer lock. Did it ever occur to you that an empty canal boat, in the hands of thousands of men, could be transferred down hill, from the canal to the river, with but little difficulty, and that there might have been some other reason than the one assigned by you? But, admitting all that you claim, did it never occur to you that the entire detail, attending the movement of a large army, is to be superintended by the commander thereof in person? I will even grant you that in theory you are right, and that General McClellan should not have had officers attached to his staff, who neglected to use every precaution to prevent failure. But be charitable. Don't fail to remember the awful disappointment when that pontoon train failed to appear upon the Rappahannock, and when the vials of wrath were poured, not upon the head of the favorite of your party, General Burnside, but upon those of Generals Halleck, Meigs, and Woodbury, and again be charitable, and do not fail to remember how carefully you have secreted that more terrible blunder than ever occurred in the annals of this or any other war, by which we have no less than twenty-three monitors, constructed at an expense of over twelve millions of dollars, and which, by the nice calculations of the naval engineers, brought in after one of them was launched, it was determined that with their armament they would float just five inches under water. Now, Judge, but do not fail to remember, who is responsible for this? Again be charitable, that the President and "Fighting Joe Hooker," carefully concealing their plans from the Commander-in-chief and the Secretary of War, to that extent that, while the battle was going on at Chancellorsville, I was informed directly, by the best authority in the premises, that "neither General Halleck nor the Secretary of War knew more of what was going on than I did," and "that all of the requisitions made during the preparations for the movement, instead of going through the ordinary channels, were ordered directly by the President;" and do you know that, to the present hour, the country has never been informed that, on that occasion, Hooker and the President fought the best army that was ever got together, numbering no less than one hundred and sixty-five thousand men, against General Lee, with an army of fifty-seven thousand—lost thirty-five thousand men —were completely routed, and to such an extent that, as I said before, but for the providential killing of Stonewall Jackson, our army would have been annihilated? Why has not Mr. Stanton told this to the families of the thirty-five thousand so unnecessarily slaughtered, instead of attempting to console them with the pitiful story that "the Eleventh army corps gave way in confusion," and that "but one third of General Hooker's army had been brought into action?"

Why did not your Committee on the Conduct of the War exhaust a few of those five hundred days, and a portion of those seventeen hundred pages, devoted to General McClellan, upon the military successes of that great leader, General Butler, before Petersburg, where six thousand of his men were marched prisoners into Richmond almost without his knowledge—he and Mr. Stanton coolly assuring the country that there had been a great fog, and that it came before breakfast?

Before I leave your friend, Mr. Stanton, I will instance another evidence of his treachery to General McClellan. All know of the disasters caused by the interference of the President and Mr. Stanton with the Army of the Potomac. It was necessary to have a victim, and General McClellan was selected and removed. A short time afterward, Pope, being placed in command, failed most disastrously, and Washington was again threatened. The President and his cabinet were alarmed to that extent that a steamer was prepared and ready to assist in their escape. With earnest entreaty and supplication McClellan was solicited to assume command and save them and Washington. He consented, ignoring the solicitations of his friends, who desired that he should first insist upon the removal of Mr. Stanton, which he utterly refused, replying that he would not permit any personal considerations to influence his conduct when the Capital was in such imminent danger. He then accomplished the greatest military success of the war. He reorganized the demoralized army of Pope while on the march, and gained the glorious victory of Antietam. McClellan's star was again in the ascendant. Mr. Stanton begged forgiveness for the past, and promised his devoted friendship for the future.

Again, General McClellan's trusting nature prevailed over the advice of his friends, and the treacherous conduct of Mr. Stanton was forgiven by General McClellan, only to be again more wickedly betrayed than ever. Washington was no sooner relieved and the President and his Cabinet safe, than, by the influence of Mr. Stanton, General McClellan was again removed from the command of the Army of the Potomac, when upon the verge of battle, and ordered into retirement.

You call up the ghosts of the departed soldiers. Be assured, General McClellan's sleep will not be disturbed by them; but what must be the broken slumbers of those who are responsible for the tens of thousands lost by Pope, and Burnside, and Hooker, in attempting to carry out what the President called his "plan," and the hundred and fifty thousand lost since the 4th of May, south of the Rapidan; and what must be the dreams of the President, who could, amid the groans of the dying that lay upon the gory field of Antietam, call for the singing of a ribald song?

In times like these we want some other than the weak and vacillating President who assured Mr. Crittenden, and the patriots who accompanied him from Kentucky, that they might go home and inform their friends that he would not violate their rights and interests by any proclamation of emancipation. Before these assurances could be transmitted to the people of Kentucky his promises had been broken, and just such a proclamation, violating all these pledges, was issued.

If any State has done nobly, and earned distinction for pure patriotism under the most trying, dreadful sufferings of this war, in which a whole people have been despoiled, families embittered against families, and members of the same family against each other to that extent that harmony can never prevail, it is the State of Kentucky; and if there was any one State that should have had influence with the administration, it was that State. But her voice, amidst the din and blood of battle, has never been heard, or, if heard for the moment, it was soon lost under the influence of Massachusetts, aided by the demon yells of radical men, who cried out extermination, and, in the same breath, proclaimed a higher law than the Constitution, which they only denounce as a covenant with hell.

The people of the South are members of the same national family with us; they must be brought back by continued force, if they will not come back by consent. But we must respect their rights, whatever they are. There is no more power in the President of the United States to control whatever right of property there may remain to them in the slave on the day on which they lay down their arms, than there is in the sheriff to insist that the poor culprit, who has violated the law in the most outrageous manner, shall be deprived of his food or his clothing, prior to his execution. The military authority of the President during the existence of the war, can apply only to personal property in the actual possession of the army, and all military authority ceases the moment peace is restored, and the only authority that can be exercised over the same from the moment hostilities cease, is lodged in the Constitutions and laws of the States, and the United States, whose mandates he, by the Constitution, is bound by his oath to obey.

Very respectfully, &c.,

HENRY M. NAGLEE.

Hon. William D. Kelly, Philadelphia.

Ft Wayne
13 Nov 54
INK
Not in M
71.2009.084.00099